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IN MEMORIAM

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In Memoriam – Jean-Paul Mauriès

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Figure 1. Jean-Paul Mauriès in 2017: Paris, Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle, laboratory Zoology-Arthropods. [Photo by Jean-Jacques Geoffroy.]

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Jean-Paul Mauriès, a prominent myriapodologist and biospeleologist, our highly estimated colleague, and more than a good friend, passed away in Guérande (Loire-Atlantique, France) on Monday 3 October 2022 at the age of 88. He died peacefully among his close relatives after a long and unfortunately painful illness and a long time far away from his beloved specimens, collections, researches and laboratory. His funeral was held in Paris (Funerarium of the Père-Lachaise Cemetery). He is survived by his two daughters, sons-in-law and grandchildren.

Jean-Paul Mauriès-Belou was born in Albi (Tarn, France) 1st December 1934. He became a biology student at the Faculty of Sciences, University of Toulouse where he got his diploma of licence es Sciences-Naturelles (SPCN, Geology, Zoology and Botanics) in 1953–1956.

He did his military service from 1960 to 1962, partly in Algeria, and in the mean time became Assitant researcher at the CNRS from 1957 to 1966, a period during which he was more and more interested and involved in myriapod biology and systematics, notably in millipede taxonomy and distribution in the Pyrenaen area.

In 1966, he moved to Paris and became Assistant-Researcher at the Laboratory Zoology-Arthropods, Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle, directed by Prof. Max Vachon, then obtained the ranks of 'Maître-Assistant' 2nd class in 1974, 'Maître-Assistant' 1st class in 1979 and finally became 'Maître de Conférences Universitaire' in 1986 until the end of his career at the MNHN.

He payed a major role in myriapodology via his work on millipede systematics; he contributed to the original descriptions of many taxa (species, genera and families) and he rapidly became one of the main worldwide specialists of the order Chordeumatida. Beside his most exciting and passionate researches at the MNHN, he was during many years the very active curator of the collection "Myriapodes et Onychophores" of the Muséum in Paris, for which he permanently gave time for enrichment, managing and scientific updating, even after his retirement as an honorary researcher.

In 1968, he became, together with Prof. Jean-Marie Demange (Muséum, Paris) and Herr Prof.-Dr. Otto Kraus (Hamburg, Germany), a co-founder of the Centre International de Myriapodologie, the CIM, today CIM—International Society for Myriapodology. For many years, this scientific society has attracted researchers from different countries and significantly supports the study of these two groups of animals on a global scale. In collaboration with Monique Nguyen Duy – Jacquemin and Jean-Jacques Geoffroy, he contributed to the functioning of the permanent CIM—Secrétariat, Bulletin of the CIM publishing and co-organisation of international congresses of myriapodology, held every three years. Jean-Paul attended many international congresses of myriapodology (ICM), he contributed to the organization of the 1st and 9th ICM in Paris and at the end of his research career he was elected a honorary member of the CIM society.

After J.-M. Demange's retirement, he contributed also to the annual course on venomous and poisonous animals, given on millipedes and centipedes at the Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle. Jean-Paul published several papers on this topics in books dealing with the function of venom.

As a specialist of myriapod biology and systematics, his work was mainly devoted to millipede taxonomy, in France and in several European countries or regions (Switzerland, the Balkan and Iberian peninsulas, Corsica...) but also in many countries through the world: North Africa, Western Africa, Indo-Pacific, the Caribbean region, French Guiana, Brazil, Venezuela, China, South-East Asia, etc. Most of his publications are related to edaphic species in different habitats and – for many of them – to taxa strictly endemic and highly adapted to extreme environments such as high mountains but also and mostly in deep subterranean systems, MSS or caves. He contributed to subterranaen biology via the publication of review articles on troglobic myriapods in encyclopedias: "Mémoires de Biospéologie", "Encyclopaedia Biospeologica", "Encyclopaedia of Cave and Karst Science". These studies reveal the presence of species showing a great heritage and paleobiogeographic interest; some of them deserving obviously protection and conservation measures. Most of the time, the rigourous descriptions of species made by Jean-Paul were wonderfully illustrated by his own handmade drawings, witness to his undeniable scientific drawing talent.

At the very end of his life, when illness had kept him away from his researches and laboratory, the publication of very last studies in press and the expected discovery of cave-dwelling species new for France help to bring him some renewed joy and deep satisfaction for his job well done. A recent paper published by European colleagues recognizes the quality of his work by creating a new chordeumatidan genus that will honor him for ever: *Maurieseuma* Antic, Spelda, 2022. Jean-Paul Mauriès leaves us as a legacy an immense quantity of unpublished documents, such as impressive study files on diplopods of Cameroon, French Guiana and, above all, Chordeumatida.

His strong and friendly relationships with his native region of Toulouse remained intact and he published many major taxonomic papers in the journal "Bulletin de la Société d'Histoire Naturelle de Toulouse". He was an active member of several other scientific societies in which he held some various responsibilities: Société de Biogéographie, Société Zoologique de France, Société Française de Systématique, Société Française d'Ecologie, and he was during decades a member of the Société Internationale de Biospéologie – International Society for Subterranean Biology. In addition, he was an elected member of the Board of Directors of the Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle and he was for a time the temporary head of the laboratory Zoology-Arthropods.

In a completely different context, our complicit friendship was fully expressed within the CNRS choir, of which he was for years a strong pillar of the bass section. He held on the occasion of several concerts in the role of an amateur but solid soloist with a warm and deep voice. In this regard, the walls of the laboratory, which have memories, still remenber the echoes of his organ starting some traditional Occitan songs:

Quand lo boièr ven de laurar
Quand lo boièr ven de laurar
Planta son aigulhada,
A, i, ò, ú,
Planta son aigulhada, A!

We honor the memory of his wife Michèle, and give our deepest friendly regards to his two daughters Nathalie and Magali, their husbands and his grandchildren.

Today, millipedes are in mourning, they lost a good friend, as we are. This great loss will be felt very sadly by the members of the international community of myriapodologists and biospeleologists.

A selection of publications by Jean-Paul Mauriès on subterranean millipedes

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Additional paper, recently published to honor J.-P. Mauriès

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